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COMIC SHOP NEWS™

From

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A Comics Specialty Outlet

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Color: Ward Batty

DC Gives Barry Allen Another Run As the Flash

So you thought the Barry Allen Flash was gone and forgotten, eh? Not quite! It seems that the folks at CBS, who are considering a ***Flash*** television movie, are looking very seriously at the Barry Allen Flash as their subject. Of course, a television pilot isn't the same as a comic book...

Barry Allen fans can take heart, though; the Barry Allen Flash (along with the Jay Garrick Flash and the Wally West Flash) will be returning to comics in late May in ***Flash Special #1***. This 80-page giant will pit all three Flashes against different incarnations of the same villain. Not only will Carmine Infantino, the premiere ***Flash*** artist, be illustrating the Barry Allen story, but Joe Kubert (who inked some of those early Flash appearances in ***Showcase***) is supplying the cover!

by WAYNE LEE

Nova Girls' Latest Model in Full Color

The Nova Girls are coming back this summer--and this time around, publisher Mariano Nicieza has announced that the heroine's adventures (which were pretty colorful to begin with) will be published in full color--a move that's sure to appeal to the Nova Girls' many fans.

In case you missed the first Nova Girls volume, ***Space 34-24-34***, the gimmick is simple but effective: the adventures of the Nova Girls are presented in a modified fumetti style. In MN Productions' graphic novels, the heroines are real--that is, they are photos of real models in comics-style costumes. The backgrounds are drawn in typical comic style, giving an attractive mixture of photographs and real-life action that has a strong appeal for comics fans who've always wondered how real women would look in those typical superheroine costumes...

The first full-color Nova Girls volume is ***Kissing Canvas***, slated for June release. This book, which features a veritable plethora of costumed females, features the Nova Girls against the Killer Secretaries and the Corporate Raiders of "Kanvas, Inc." Nicieza promises that this book will have 'the best darn wrestling fight scenes you'll see anywhere this summer!"

Forthcoming later in 1990 are two other Nova Girls volumes. ***Headgames*** is slated for August release; ***Fun House*** is on the October schedule. Fun House will have a special guest star appearing in its pages: Grampa Al Lewis, who many pop culture aficionados will remember from the original ***Munsters*** television series.

Kissing Canvas, a 48-page full color graphic album, will be priced at $5.50. The prices for future Nova Girls adventures will be announced closer to presstime.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

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Enemy Ace Graphic Novel Takes Wing in August

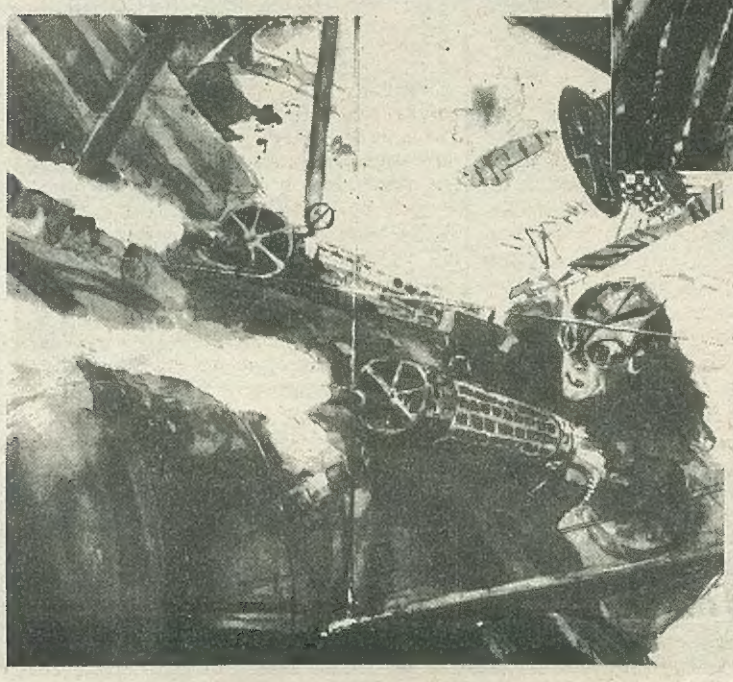
Can an enemy ace become a hero? In the case of Hans Von Hammer, the answer is a most definite "yes." Hans von Hammer, the Enemy Ace, appeared in a powerful series of stories in the pages of ***Star Spangled War Stories, Our Army at War,*** and ***Showcase*** in the late 1960's and early 1970's; these Robert Kanigher-Joe Kubert stories were atypical war tales, exploring the angst of the Enemy Ace in a way that had never been done before in comics. They also became favorites of fans and professionals alike, presenting a questioning attitude towards war at a time when much of the nation was questioning the wisdom of a war in Vietnam.

In August, writer/artist George Pratt links the aerial combat of World War II and the grim ground war in Vietnam in a much more tangible way; in ***Enemy Ace: War Idyll,*** the fully painted graphic novel Pratt has worked on for years, a former tunnel rat in Vietnam finds himself face to face with an old man who is formerly the most heralded enemy ace in World War II.

Enemy Ace: War Idyll is Pratt's attempt to answer the question "why?" The tunnel rat is now a reporter; his job is to visit a sanitarium on the coast of Germany where the elderly Hans von Hammer quietly sits out the remnants of his life, having reached a peace with himself over his wartime actions. The reporter is far less sanguine about his involvement in his war; in the course of his interview with von Hammer, he finds answers to questions about his own wartime experiences.

Enemy Ace: War Idyll is a graphic novel built around von Hammer's war experiences; as such, it is filled with the sort of aerial combat that gives the series its visual appeal. But it's also a story of men and war, one that attempts to answer the question, "When did the hero become the killer," according to Bob Wayne of DC Comics.

Pratt, whose painted work has appeared on the covers



of ***Legends of the Dark Knight #1-5***, has put over three years worth of effort into this 128-page hardcover graphic novel. ***War Idyll*** is a 128-page original work; in addition to the story itself, the graphic novel will also contain sketchbook pages by Pratt.

Enemy Ace: War Idyll is scheduled for August 2nd release. The hardcover graphic novel will carry a $24.95 pricetag.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

Rocky Horror Does the Time Warp Into the 90's

Since its debut in the 1970's , one of the biggest cult crazes of all has been the ***Rocky Horror Picture Show,*** a hip, decadent, and irreverent horror/rock musical farce that has held the interest of millions of fans. Unlike so many crazes that have faded away after a moment in the sun, ***Rocky Horror*** continues to attract crowds whenever it's shown. That sustained interest certainly bodes well for Caliber Press' upcoming ***Rocky Horror Picture Show*** comic book limited series, the first issue of which is set for July release.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show will be published in full color--a rarity for Caliber, which primarily publishes black and white comics. The book will be written and illustrated by Kevin Van Hook, colored by Carol Van Hook, and lettered by Ken Bruzenak. Caliber editor Gary Reed says that the comic book series will be a faithful adaptation of the film, making it the perfect accompaniment for the upcoming videotape release of ***The Rocky Horror Picture Show***.

The first issue of ***The Rocky Horror Picture Show*** will adapt the first third of the film, up to the grand entrance of Dr. Frank N. Furter. Each issue of the limited series will include approximately 24 pages of story and art; the remainder of each 48-page issue will be packed full of background information, interviews, song lyrics, and both black and white and color photos from the film. To ensure that the mini-series is as faithful to the film as possible, ***Rocky Horror*** film producer Lou Adler is overseeing the entire project. Each issue will carry a $2.95 pricetag.

by WAYNE LEE

NEWSBRIEFS

ALIENS VS. KINGS IN DISGUISE?

Not quite--but both the ***Aliens*** and ***Kings in Disguise*** series are featured in ***Dark Horse Presents #42***, set for late June release. And while these two series are quite different, there's a reason for having them both featured in the same book.

"We felt that once the many readers of ***Aliens*** were exposed to ***Kings in Disguise***, they would recognize how truly wonderful this tale is, and we hope that they go back to their local comic shop and pick up all the new issues of the continuing Kitchen Sink title," **Mike Richardson,** publisher of Dark Horse said.

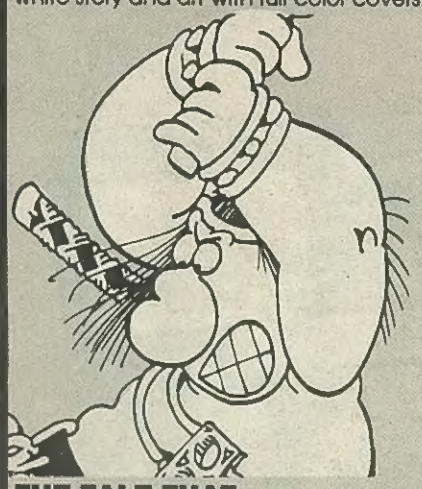
GUT YOU LIKE A FISH, BEAN MAN... TOSS YOU ON THE TRACKS... NOBODY' LL EVER KNOW, AND THEY WON'T GIVE A DAMN...
'CAUSE YOU'LL BE THE GARBAGE ... NOT ME...
Warning: This is *not* a scene from *DHP #42*

Furthermore, Kitchen Sink publisher **Denis Kitchen** has announced that his company will release a ***Kings in Disguise*** trade paperback volume in August, just two months after the ***Dark Horse Presents*** featuring the storyline appears.

The one-time appearance of Kings in Disguise in DHP #42 will consist of an all-new ten-page story. "Jim and Dan (**Jim Vance** and **Dan Burr**, the creators of ***Kings in Disguise***) have put together a perfect tale that will both introduce the new reader to the series as well as entertain those already familiar with the characters," Denis Kitchen said. "I'm looking forward to the reaction of Dark Horse readers to Jim and Dan's work."

The ***Aliens*** story in ***Dark Horse Presents #42*** is the first of two eight-page installments by **Paul Guinan.** Guinan's two-parter is an Aliens stand-alone tale; fans who want to see Guinan's work can take a look at his *Heartbreakers* saga that began in ***Dark Horse Presents #35.***

Dark Horse Presents #42 is a $1.95 comic book that features 32 pages of black and white story and art with full-color covers.



THE TALE THAT GROO IN THE TELLING

Okay, he died in his first graphic novel, so it's only appropriate that Marvel will follow up ***The Death of Groo*** with ***The Life of Groo***. This all-new 64-page graphic novel by **Sergio Aragones** and **Mark Evanier** is a sort of *Groo: Year One* volume, offering the origin of Groo in all its groo-some glory, the first-ever appearance of Groo's parents (who apparently aren't too proud of their offspring), the story of Groo's childhood friends, and the story of Groo's climb to the top of the stupid-barbarian pantheon. It's just the sort of tale that Groo fans have been waiting for! ***The Life of Groo*** is set for July 19th release; it is priced at $9.95.

LET'S TELL ALL ABOUT NATION OF SNITCHES...

Have you ever watched ***Unsolved Mysteries*** or any of the other "crime fink" shows that present the tales of heinous crimes and wanted criminals, all the while urging viewers to turn in information on anyone they think might have a connection to the crime? If so, then you know what's on writer/artist **Jon Hammer**'s mind in his upcoming one-shot, ***Nation of Snitches.***

In this 48-page work by the creator of ***The Drowned Girl***, readers are presented with a not-too-far-from-reality world in which these shows have found an even better way of drawing their viewers into the action: instead of appealing to a sense of civic duty, the shows offer valuable prizes for outstanding crime tips.

This week's spotlight serial crime on "Nation of Snitches," the most popular tattle-for-prizes show on television, is a series of murders in which the victims have crosses carved into their foreheads. "Satanic slaughters," the powers that be are sure...

But Hank Fleisch isn't so sure. In fact, he knows that's not true. Hank's an unappreciated corporate janitor with a very sharp intellect.

He's also the killer.

Nation of Snitches gives Jon Hammer a chance to poke fun at a great many elements of today's society, from rap music to celebrity gurus to societal values and media overkill. The 48-page comic book one-shot, priced at $4.95, available July 19th.

A SOURCE IS A SOURCE, OF COURSE, OF COURSE

Fans of the ***DC Heroes Role-Playing Game Second Edition*** have been asking for more updated sourcebooks to accompany the new edition of the RPG, and Mayfair Games has listened. That's why you'll find a new sourcebook on the shelves in May, featuring some of the most popular DC heroes.

The New Titans Sourcebook, a 128-page trade paperback reference book, will be released in May, just in time to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the New Titans. Titans co-creator **George Perez** will contribute a new cover for the book.

The New Titans Sourcebook is a comprehensive volume, covering the complete history of the Titans from their inception to the current post-Crisis incarnation. There will be multiple statistics for characters such as Robin, who has since become Nightwing; Kid Flash, who is now known as the Flash; and Wonder Girl, whose current identity is Troia. Other characters featured for the first time are Tula/Aquagirl, Lilith, and Timothy Drake, the new Robin.

The New Titans Sourcebook will be presented in comic-sized trade paperback format, similar to the ***Batman Role-Playing Game.*** The Sourcebook will carry a price of $10.

OIL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

Oil wells in the Savage Land? That seems very likely in the upcoming ***Ka-Zar Graphic Novel.*** It seems that oil companies have discovered a secret that even Ka-Zar knew little about: a "lost" portion of the Savage Land, under the Mojave Desert. Ka-Zar, Shanna the She-Devil, and Wyatt Wingfoot arrive just in time to find oil companies ready to develop the land for future profits. Unfortunately, the Savage Land may be destroyed in the process.

The ***Ka-Zar Graphic Novel*** is written by the 4Winds team of **Chuck Dixon** and **Tim Truman**; the 64-page graphic novel is illustrated by **Gary Kwapisz** and **Ricardo Villagran.** Look for it on June 28th; Ka-Zar will carry a $8.95 pricetag.

STELFREEZE COVER HEATS UP COMICS REVUE 50

Brian Stelfreeze, the acclaimed artist of ***Psycops*** who is busy at work on a new project for Piranha Press, took a little bit of time to prepare a special airbrushed cover for Comics Interview Press's ***Comics Revue #50,*** set for July release. The cover features Batman, the Phantom, and Flash Gordon--characters whose strips are regularly featured in the pages of ***Comics Revue***. Comics Revue also features Calvin & Hobbes, Outland, Steve Canyon, Gasoline alley, and Modesty Blaise in its pages. Each issue is priced at $4.95.

NICOTAT BARES PLANS FOR NEW BORIS ADVENTURES

Boris the Bear, Nicotat Comics' cute bear-hero, was a smash when he first appeared several years ago; when market fluctuations brought an end to many independent comics in 1987-88, ***Boris*** appeared to be one of the casualties. Now it appears that Boris is ready for action in the 90's, though--and to prove it, he's teaming up with Australia's premiere super-team, The Southern Squadron, in the return premiere of his own comic!

Boris, a powerful teddy-bear hero in the tried-and-true ***Captain Teddy*** mold, originally appeared in a series of superhero satires. In his new series, though, he becomes involved in more super-heroic action as he joins with the Southern Cross to fight alongside the team. This book might be of double interest to superteam fans--Southern Cross has already appeared in **Munden's Bar** and will soon appear in their own comic from Eternity. Fans who are unfamiliar with these Australian heroes will be able to find out who they are once ***Boris the Bear #25*** hits the stands; **David M. de Vries, Glen Lumsden,** and **Gary Chaloner** are offering a four-page solo story of the Squadron to give readers a little taste of the series.

Boris the Bear #25, a 32-page black and white comic with full color covers, is written by **James Dean Smith** and **Steve Mattson**; Smith illustrates the cuddly crusader's exploits. Slated for June release, ***Boris*** will carry a $1.95 pricetag.

NIGHTBREED HAS BRIGHT FUTURE AT EPIC

Some fans have presumed that the ***Nightbreed*** series from Marvel's Epic Comics is nothing more than an adaptation of the recently-released **Clive Barker** film. Boy, won't they be surprised when ***Nightbreed #5*** hits the stands in mid-July?! The movie adaptation finishes up in ***Nightbreed #4***; beginning with the fifth issue, **Dan Chichester** and **Jim Baikie** continue the series with all-new stories set in the Nightbreed universe as envisioned in Clive Barker's novel ***Cabal.*** Each issue will focus on the inhabitants of the city of Midian; in the fifth issue, the storyline deals with an old woman, a little girl, and a number of monsters--some quite nice, some not so nice. Boone will be back in upcoming issues as well, giving fans a chance to find out what happens after the film's story is over. ***Nightbreed #5*** is priced at $2.25; it is set to hit the comics racks on July 19th.

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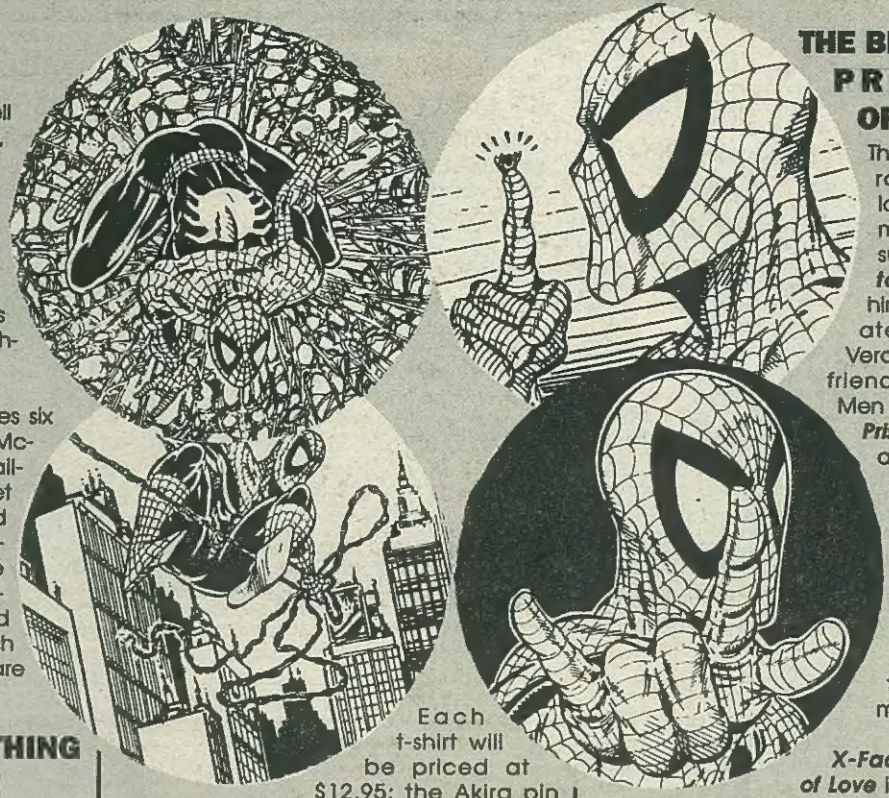
NEWSBRIEFS

NEW SPIDEY SET'S RIGHT ON THE BUTTON

If you get the feeling this very well may be Todd McFarlane's summer, it look like you're right. Not only is his upcoming ***Spider-Man #1*** a shoo-in for the hottest comic of 1990, but a month after it appears, Marvel will offer fans a ***Todd McFarlane Spider-Man button set*** that's sure to have Todd's many fans climbing over one another at the comic racks.



The Spider-Man button set features six 1.25" buttons, each illustrated by McFarlane. The buttons will be available only in comic shops; each set will be mounted on a comic-sized backing board and shrink-wrapped (thus, true McFarlane fans will have to have two sets--one to keep shrink-wrapped and one to open up and wear). Each set is priced at $7.95; the buttons are scheduled for July 17th release.

GRAPHITTI HAS SOMETHING UP ITS (SHORT) SLEEVE

Summer tends to reach its hottest points in late July--maybe that's why Graphitti Designs has chosen that time to release eight different t-shirts just perfect for warm-weather wear!

Graphitti's t-shirt offering leads off with a **Dave Gibbons** design for ***Give Me Liberty***, the new limited series Gibbons is producing in tandem with **Frank Miller**. The shirt will feature the full color first issue cover painting by Gibbons, reproduced on a white cotton tee.

Betty Page fans will be pleased to hear that **Dave Stevens'** ***Betty Page t-shirt*** will finally be ready for release come July. Stevens has totally redone the art design for this shirt since its first announcement; according to Graphitti, he just wasn't happy with the first design. This shirt will also be a white tee with a full-color design reproduced from the original artwork.

Mike Kaluta returns to the Shadow in July--and while it's only a t-shirt and not a full comic book, it's better than no Kaluta at all! The ***Kaluta Shadow t-shirt*** will feature a full-color design on a white tee.

Starstruck is returning to comics in July courtesy of Dark Horse--and **Mike Kaluta's** ***Starstruck t-shirt*** is the perfect thing to wear while perusing the comic by Elaine Lee and Kaluta. The new shirt features a full-color Annie and Harry from the series on a heavyweight white cotton tee.

Moebius fans who have pretty much worn out their old Moebius shirts can replace 'em with a new one in July. The new Moebius design is reproduced in full color on a white tee; it is the first of a new series of ***Moebius shirts.***

St. George, one of the Shadowline Saga heroes, gets his own t-shirt in July. The white shirt features a full-color ***St. George*** illustration by **Klaus Janson.**

You say you want something other than white t-shirts? Well, how about a navy blue ***Marshal Law shirt*** that features the Marshal Law logo in white? Or perhaps a ***Stalkers shirt*** that features a multi-colored chest logo on a light grey shirt? They'll be reaching comic shops in July as well.

There you go--eight shirts, perfect for summer wear. If you want to jazz 'em up a little bit, you can accessorize 'em with Graphitti's ***Akira cloisonne pin,*** featuring the English Akira logo with the Japanese characters overprinted. After all, a little touch of jewelry is needed in some formal situations...

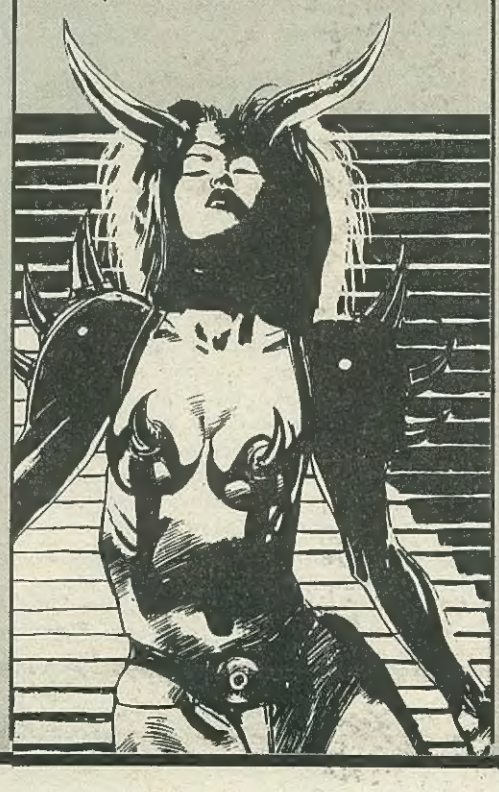
Each t-shirt will be priced at $12.95; the Akira pin carries a $5.95 pricetag. As with all special items of this sort, you might want to let the folks at your local comic shop know that you're interested--and tell 'em that ***CSN*** sent you!...

WOULD YOU BELIEVE "SHE-FAUST?"

Faust has been quite a success for Northstar Productions--so much so, in fact, that in July the company will add a second Faust title to its line-up. ***Faust Saga***, a 32-page comic featuring two continuing storylines in each issue, explores the lives of two different Fausts: a female Faust in the world of 1964, and a futuristic Faust in the world of 2020.

David Quinn will write both "Singha's Talons" (the female Faust series) and "Faust 2020." "Singha's Talons" will be illustrated by **Mark Beachum,** who has a strong fan following behind him due to his work on ***Flare*** for Hero Comics. "Faust 2020" will be illustrated by **Tim Vigil, Joe Vigil,** and **Rick Bryant**; Tim Vigil is, of course, the artist whose work on the original ***Faust*** series made is such a popular title.

Northstar warns that ***Faust Saga*** is intended for mature readers; while it will *not* have graphic sexual content, it *will* have nudity and the same sort of graphic violence readers find in the pages of ***Faust. Faust Saga #1*** is set for July release; each issue will be priced at $2.50.



THE BEAST IS A PRISONER OF LOVE

The Beast has a rather tragic love-life. In the most recent issue of ***X-Factor,*** he found himself "Desperately Seeking Vera," his old girlfriend from his X-Men days. Now, in ***Prisoner of Love,*** an upcoming bookshelf-format one-shot, the Beast has to save an emotional vampire who is the target of a murder plot.

X-Factor: Prisoner of Love is a collaborative work by writer **Jim Starlin** (the author of the current ***Silver Surfer*** series) and artist **Jackson Guice** (the illustrator of **Dr. Strange**). The X-Factor story spotlights Hank McCoy and Synthia, the emotional vampire he must protect--and at the same time resist. ***X-Factor: Prisoner of Love*** is slated for July 5th release; the 48-page one-shot is priced at $4.95.

FEMFORCE HAS A DEVIL OF A TIME

Femforce #26, scheduled for June release, kicks off a new multi-part Femforce adventure that pits the team against "The Devil Below." In this storyline by **Rik Levins, The Count,** and **John Dell,** Dr. Weir discovers that Tara's Jungle Island is the current stronghold of the Black Shroud. Dr. Weir, Nightveil, Paragon, and Tara set out against the Black Shroud--but before too long, the Shroud has ensnared the heroes in their worst nightmares. **Will Meugniot,** still fondly remembered by many fans for his work on the early issues of **Mark Evanier's** ***DNAgents,*** supplies the cover to this 44 page, $2.50 AC Comic.

COMICO ILLUSTRATED MOVES AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

Comico's new anthology ***Comico Illustrated,*** which ***CSN*** has already told you about, was originally slated for fall debut; Comico has now moved the book ahead on its schedule, with ***Comico Illustrated #1*** set for August 2nd release. ***Comico Illustrated*** is an anthology title that presents 32 pages of black-and-white comics work by a variety of talents--some already established in the field, some new.

The first issue leads off with **Ho Che Anderson's** Johnny Angel. It follows that up with a story of "death, rebirth, and Hoboken" by **Nat Case** and **Jill Thompson**; the adventures of Jumping Jack, the world's only bouncing six-year-old, by **Thomas DeSieno**; "Classics Desecrated" by **Doug Wheeler** and **David Gatzmer** (poking fun this time at Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart"); and a full-color cover by **John K. Snyder.** Each issue of ***Comico Illustrated*** will carry a $2.25 pricetag; the book is scheduled for quarterly release.

BLAB ASSAULTS READERS WITH ALL-CRIME ISSUE

Blab! editor **Monte Beauchamp** is all too aware that crime sells newspapers; just check out the headlines as you walk past the newspaper racks tomorrow. He's also pretty confident that crime can sell ***Blab!***--and that's why ***Blab! 5*** is an all-crime issue. ***Blab! 5,*** a 128-page digest sized square-bound volume, presents a variety of crime tales. The book leads off with a cover by **Joe Coleman**; Coleman also contributes a cartoon account of '30s mass murderer Carl Panzram. **Spain Rodriguez** contributes a wistful look back at two friends from his past, "Wilcoxson and Nussbum," who got their kicks from blowing things up with a bazooka.

Ray Zone offers a look at the crime comics industry in a 20-page illustrated history. **Doug Allen** takes his creation *Steven* on a surreal crime journey with space aliens and cops. ***Richard Sala*** presents a 15-page story, "The Big Dark Zero," that deals with murder in the art world. Also featured in the issue are **Skip Williamson, Lloyd Dangle, Drew Friedman, J.R. Clowes,** and more. ***Blab! 5,*** a $7.95 all-ages book, is scheduled for late June release.

PREVIEWS

Give & Take

by Cliff Biggers & Brett Brooks

Once again, I'm, Cliff. *Brett's doing the italicized thing.* If anyone had any doubts that summer was just about here, the plethora of entertaining comics scheduled for the next month should be the clincher.

For instance...

Iron Man is a title that really deserves quality; after all, the character is one of Marvel's primary heroes from the early 1960's, and he's become a vital part of the Marvel Universe both in his armored form and as Tony Stark, head of Stark Industries. Unfortunately, ***Iron Man*** hasn't been able to live up to its potential; it seems to be plagued by short-lived creative teams who move on to something else and by fill-in issues that are all too forgettable.

The series has had its bright moments, though; the Tony Stark alcoholism storyline (collected in trade paperback) is one such moment, and the Armor Wars series (also collected in trade paperback) is another.

It looks like the odds are very much in favor of **Armor Wars II,** the John Byrne-John Romita Jr.-Bob Wiacek storyline, will be another such bright moment.

Armor Wars II has had a couple of false starts--it was originally scheduled to begin last month, but some creative changes forced the series' beginning to be delayed until ***Iron Man #258.***

John Byrne is on hand as writer for this storyline, taking over for originally-scheduled Bob Layton, who has moved on to other things. Fans of the essential Iron Man will be glad to see Byrne taking the helm; Byrne's tendency to bring Marvel heroes back to their roots will certainly be appreciated here. I appreciated the nostalgic touch of seeing Iron Man don the familiar metal suit on page twelve of the series kick-off--it harkens back to the earliest days of the series.

This isn't just a back-to-the-basics storyline, though; in fact, it's far from it. Byrne's storyline is entrenched in the most up-to-date additions to the Iron Man mythos, including the biochip that allows him to walk. That biochip is giving Tony Stark some twinges of pain--and you can be sure that those twinges will become important later on.

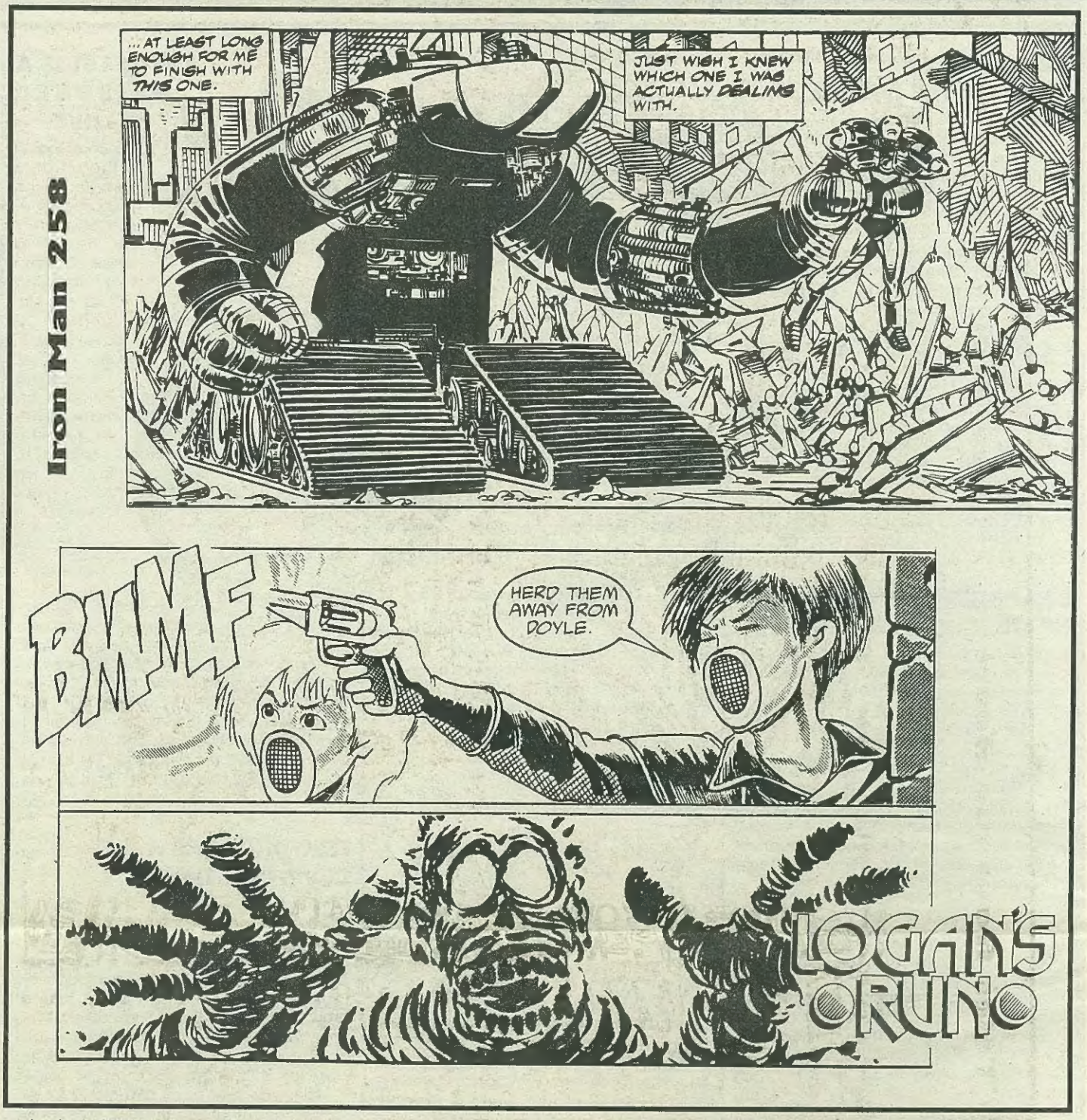
Byrne is at his best as a writer when he does these encompassing storylines that bring together a diverse variety of villains, supporting characters, and subplots. This means that Armor Wars II is his kind of story; it shines from the first pages.

A lot of that shine can be attributed to the outstanding artwork of John Romita Jr. and Bob Wiacek. John Romita Jr. has been a favorite of mine as long as he's illustrated ***Daredevil***--but as much as I like his work there, I like his work here more. Ann Nocenti's ***Daredevil*** storylines have been mystical in nature; Romita really seems to be in his element when he's drawing high-tech machinery and larger-than-life superheroic action. Byrne gives him a chance to show off, and JRJr doesn't pass up the opportunity.

Looking for classic Marvel superhero action on a grand scale? Armor Wars II is what you want--and it's waiting for you beginning in Iron Man #258.

*I really have enjoyed **Iron Man** since I began collecting comics; In fact, it was Iron Man who probably got me into the field to begin with. That is one of the reasons that I'm so glad that Armor Wars II is coming out. I enjoyed the first series and feel that there is strong potential for the second series-- especially now that I've read the first part.*

You're right in your statement about Byrne's ability to draw characters back to their roots, and I think that his talents will shine brightly here, but I can't help but feel that Romita Jr helped out on this story a good bit. JRJr has had some of his best experiences associated with Iron Man, and I think that he feels very close to the character. His work here shows that closeness. This is the best work I've seen from Romita Jr.


Iron Man 258
... AT LEAST LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO FINISH WITH THIS ONE.
JUST WISH I KNEW WHICH ONE I WAS ACTUALLY DEALING WITH.
BMMF
HERD THEM AWAY FROM DOYLE.
LOGAN'S RUN

Iron Man *fans will be very happy in a couple of months with the release of this new story coupled with the release of the original Armor Wars in trade paperback. Solid, really solid.*

*Well, this is certainly a change--a good change though. British writer Peter Milligan and newcomer Chris Bachalo have combined their talents to bring us **Shade, the Changing Man**--but Ditko was never like this. Oh, the basic framework is based on the situations and ideas presented by Ditko in the early seventies, but that is as close as this comes to being the Shade of the past.*

*It is also very good. DC has developed a formula for creating good books in the past couple of years-- take an obscure character, add a British talent, mix well, and garnish with a touch of the bizarre. Shade falls into this category, and as such, is destined to appeal to fans of such books as **Sandman, Animal Man,** o r **Doom Patrol**. Milligan does an excellent job of crafting the uneasy; throughout this first issue, you are constantly in a state of confusion and unrest, even though you understand perfectly what is going on. However, Milligan could use a handbook on the social attitudes of the modern South.*

You've hit on my major complaint with Shade; the story shows an antiquated anti-Southern bias that I resent. Had the same bias been directed against an ethnic or religious minority, the book would be roundly chastised, and deservedly so. I wish Milligan hadn't succumbed to regional stereotyping, because the story is so good that it could have been even more compelling without the black-hating-South cliche. It says a lot for Milligan, though, that in spite of this beginning that really hit me the wrong way, I finished the book with a positive impression. This is a well-crafted, sophisticated horror work that is even more accessible to most comics readers than ***Sandman.***

Agreed. The art by Chris Bachalo is surprisingly good. I don't know where this guy has been hiding himself, but I sure am glad that he came out of the shadows. Bachalo's art is easily compared to that of Berni Wrightson, but he conveys a uniqueness of style as well. I like it a lot.

Shade is still Rac Shade, and he is still from Meta, but he isn't quite the way you remember him. He seems to be stuck in another dimension-- the Dimension of Madness-- and can only manifest himself in the body of someone who is already here on Earth. Of course, his manifestation kills whoever it was that used the body beforehand, but it's okay because Shade uses the body of someone who's already dead. So don't buy this issue thinking that you're going to be reading about a guy from another dimension who wears a super-suit to fight off vile villains, or you may be disappointed. But, just to let you know, the book is about this guy from another dimension who wears a super-suit and he fights some really vile villains-- kinda.

You're right--and the fact that it is more-or-less a superhero book makes Milligan's success at creating a horror feel even more noteworthy. At times this is reminiscent of the film ***The Hidden***--or what Deadman might be if the concept were created today. It manages to take that standard alien-come-to-warn-Earth concept and twist it just enough that nothing seems quite the same.

Jack London's ***Call of the Wild*** is an outstanding work of realism that helped herald the way to the naturalist movement in American literature. Unfortunately, all too many people have tried to reinterpret the storyline as a simple Lassie-like animal tale. That wasn't London's intention at all.

Thankfully, Charles Dixon is well-read enough to realize that. That's why his ***Classics Illustrated*** adaptation of ***Call of the Wild*** reads so well; he presents the work in the manner intended by its author. It's a story with minimal dialogue because it is foremost a dog's story, not a man's story. As a very visual work, it adapts well to comics; fans who have been asking for more traditional Classics Illustrated will be pleased with this Dixon-Villagran adaptation.

Traditional in what sense, though? The art is painted by Villagran, which is hardly traditional comics art. Th story is traditional in the sense that it is very close to the original work (and may indeed be the best written adaptation yet), but the story is told from a dog's point of view. So, this comic may be steeped in tradition--but I don't know if traditional is the right word for it.

The word I would use is more along the lines

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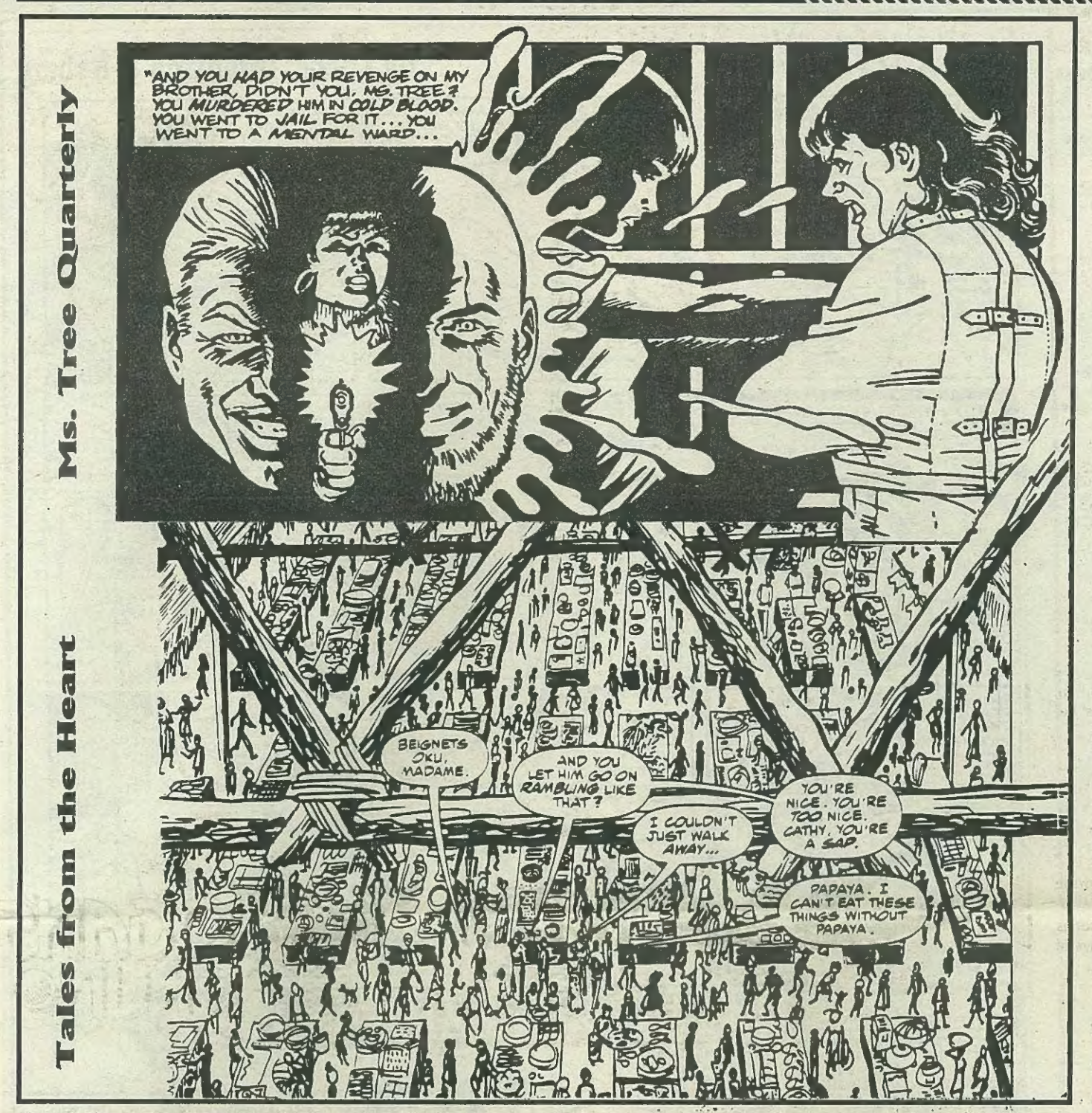

Ms. Tree Quarterly
Tales from the Heart
"AND YOU HAD YOUR REVENGE ON MY BROTHER, DIDN'T YOU, MS. TREE? YOU MURDERED HIM IN COLD BLOOD. YOU WENT TO JAIL FOR IT... YOU WENT TO A MENTAL WARD...
BEIGNETS OKU, MADAME.
AND YOU LET HIM GO ON RAMBLING LIKE THAT?
I COULDN'T JUST WALK AWAY...
YOU'RE NICE. YOU'RE TOO NICE. CATHY, YOU'RE A SAP.
PAPAYA. I CAN'T EAT THESE THINGS WITHOUT PAPAYA.

*of great! I have enjoyed every one of the **Classics Illustrated** that have been released to date, but I don't know if I've enjoyed reading any of them as much as I have Call of the Wild. If the quality continues to increase at this rate, First is going to surpass the literature itself in quality before long.*

*Most comics fans are familiar in some way with **Logan's Run**. They've either seen the movie, watched the TV show, read the old comic, or, for a few fans, read the novels that everything is based on. Well, don't you think it's time to bring Logan back and get him out on the road to Sanctuary again? Good, because that's what's happening. Adventure Comics, the same company who brings you **Planet of the Apes**, has procured the rights to **Logan's Run**.*

The comic is being adapted straight from the works of George Clayton Johnson and William F. Nolan, which means that the story may be a slight bit unfamiliar to those people who have only seen the movie. But be grateful-- this is far better. The adaptation comes to us from Tom Mason and Chris Ulm with art by Barry Blair; it's obvious that they know their material. This comic is a wonderful read, and for hard-core science-fiction fans it is a must. The story is tight and the suspense high throughout the book. Ulm and Mason have captured the very spirit of what the novels are about. Unfortunately, this also means that the book is directed at mature audiences-- Logan's world isn't for children.

Logan's Run is, in a way, the ultimate *carpe diem* sort of story; these people had best gather their rosebuds while they may, because they aren't going to have much of a chance in their all-too-brief future. The film managed to make it into a precursor of the ***Running Man*** and little else. I'm very glad that Tom Mason and Chris Ulm have captured the anxiety, paranoia, and vitality of the original novel; once again, Adventure manages to successfully adapt to comics a work that had been badly handled by others.

Tales From the Heart is an intensely human story; based on Cindy Goff's experiences in the Peace Corps, it carries the reader through the experiences of life in Africa. It also helps the reader discover--along with the book's characters--the essential cultural differences of the regions in which the Peace Corps operates.

Most importantly, though, it's an intensely entertaining story--and that's the main reason anyone who picks up Epic's ***Tales From the Heart of Africa*** is going to be pleased with their decision.

This stand-alone story can by read by people who have never seen the original ***Tales From the Heart*** series, although it will be particularly enjoyable to those who are familiar with the book that inspires this one-shot. ***Tales From the Heart of Africa*** focuses on differing expectations held by various Peace Corps volunteers--expectations as to how those they have come to assist should react, expectations as to how things should be done, and expectations as to what each person's job is (and should be).

The story revolves around a seemingly simple task--the building of a school. It is the apparent simplicity of the task that makes it such a problem--because the task turns out to be not so simple after all.

Epic deserves commendations for bringing a work of this scope to a much larger audience than would ever have seen the original Tales From the Heart series. They're giving all of you a chance to find out just how powerful these ***Tales From the Heart*** are--don't miss your opportunity!

*Well, I never read the original incarnation of **Tales from the Heart,** mostly due to the fact that it sold out so quickly at my local comics shop! I agree that Epic is due some praise for the efforts to bring this kind of quality work to the public. Small publishers often produce quality material, but never have it seen because of poor distribution. It's a shame, but it's true.*

*On a quality level, **Tales from the Heart** is superb. The story is very entertaining and enlightening as well. There are genuine human actions and emotions at play in these pages. Plus we see a glimpse into another world that we rarely hear about.*

Epic's first issue is very well done, and hopefully a harbinger of things to come. We shall wait, and we shall see.

*Reviewing **A-1** has become a staple here at **CSN**, but we're not going to let that stop us! If you have never bought an issue of **A-1**, tell me why? Every issue delivers something that is bound to please any reader. There isn't a finer forum for the creator to express himself than what has been created in the pages of **A-1**. If you have bought **A-1** you know what I'm talking about, and will be anxiously awaiting this new issue. The highlights for me of **A-1 Book 4** are: everything actually-- this is the best issue yet! But still, I want to mention the Grendel story by James Robinson and D'Isaeli, and "Hellcity" by Alan Martin and Jaime Hewlett (creators of **Tank Girl**-- yeah!), and the Moebius portfolio, showing some fascinating work by this master illustrator. But there is so much more. Please, do yourself a favor, read **A-1**. It's for your own fun.*

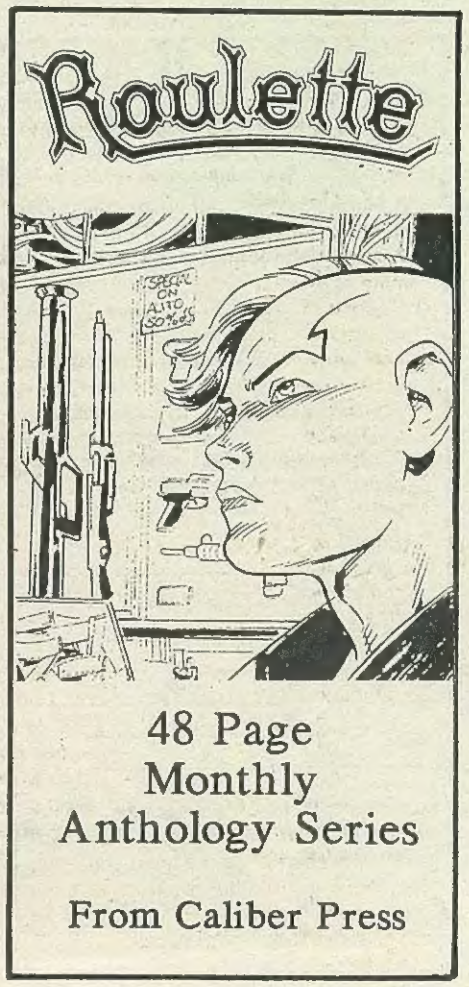
We agree--I, too, think the Grendel piece is the best in the issue, although that may be because I really enjoy Grendel when the concept is done well. It's nice to see it done well once again...

Ms. Tree is the kind of female detective I like. Don't give me genteel, mannerly old women; society matrons with too much time on their hands; or sophisticated, wealthy, and glamorous women who dabble in investigation. Instead, give me a no-nonsense hard-boiled detective who doesn't feel that being womanly and being a private eye are mutually exclusive.

Ms. Tree is the best example of this sort of detective that you can find in the comics world (in fact, she's probably the second-best example you'll find in any form of detective fiction--but until Sue Grafton's Kinsey Millhone comes to comics, Ms. Tree is numero uno in this field). The biggest problem Max Allan Collins and Terry Beatty have had is the relatively small amount of space devoted to Ms. Tree stories in earlier Ms. Tree books.

That's one complaint that no one will make about DC's ***Ms. Tree Quarterly.*** This 80-page comic kicks off with 48 pages of all-new Ms. Tree adventure. And what an adventure it is; the storyline brings to a head the long-running Ms. Tree-Muerta family conflict in a refreshing way. Collins avoids a simplistic gangland-thug-shootout; in doing so, he shows readers for once and for all that Ms. Tree isn't a comics-author's attempt to write a mystery. It's a mystery comic by a mystery writer.

Time for an aside; have you noticed how inept so many writers are outside of their chosen fields? ***The Further Adventures of Batman,*** last year's paperback that offered a number of science fiction and mystery writers a chance to pen a Batman story, proved that most of them are *embarrassingly* bad at writing comics adventures. Even worse, you can tell from the stories that many of them actually thought they were doing a good job of it (there's also a clear indication that many of them thought they were "slumming," but that's another issue for another time); all they demonstrated was that there's an



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art to comics stories that many writers don't possess, just as many comics writers don't make good sf or mystery writers. In fact, the only particularly talented comics-mystery writers who come to mind are Mike Barr, Mark Evanier, and the aforementioned Max Collins.

Back to ***Ms. Tree Quarterly #1***. If you enjoy detective fiction, you'll enjoy this book; if you enjoy (here comes a virtual cliche in the comics medium) gritty, realistic stories, you'll enjoy this book.

Oh, you have to have costumed heroes before you can really enjoy a comic? Then check out ***Ms. Tree Quarterly #1***; it has Midnight (a costumed pulp-detective style hero) and Batman (a costumed...but you know who he is, don't you?). Even if you pick it up for these stories, though, read the Ms. Tree lead. Then you'll see why the book is called ***Ms. Tree Quarterly***. She's the star of the book--and deservedly so.

*Hey, I read **Ms. Tree** long before DC got a hold of her, so I'm real happy that she's back. This story isn't at all what I was expecting though, which is just another attribute to Max Collins writing. Just when I think that I've got this guy figured out, he goes off in another direction. Go figure!*

Ms. Tree (slur the words together if you haven't gotten the joke yet) has deserved attention for some time, and I'm glad to see it getting it, though for a while I feared for it's very existence. The first series ended with Tree owning under half of her own title; other characters and reprints filling the void, so I was concerned when I first read that she would be sharing this title as well. But all is well! This is a title with many pages,and the quarterly production schedule allows plenty of time for Collins and Beatty to produce this work.

*Which leads me to mention, I was impressed with Terry Beatty's work in this book. He has grown tremendously as an artist, and the Ms. Tree Quarterly seems a perfect chance to prove his talent. Oh well, aren't we all just happy campers. (And Cliff, what about the **Further Adventures of the Joker**? Gee, some people are never happy. Next...*

*Well, it's been one of the most anticipated events in recent times, and it's finally here. We are on the horizon of **World's Finest**. It won't be out until the beginning of June, but we wanted to make sure that we got a chance to talk about it first.*

Call me sentimental, but I've really been wait-

BATMAN™ by Loebs, Infantino & Nyberg

I HEARD THEIR VOICES, ALFRED. THE GANG THAT'S BEEN TERRORIZING GOTHAM IS LED BY ITS RICHEST CITIZENS!
5-7-90
I HAVE TO GET INSIDE THAT GANG.
AND HOW DO YOU PLAN TO WRANGLE AN INVITATION, SIR?
LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG
HARVEY DENT DIDN'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE GETTING INVITED!
IN THE EXCLUSIVE MIDAS CLUB...
BRUCE! WHAT'S THE MATTER?
NOW TO TRY OUT MY PLAN...
I... I WAS MUGGED, PETER!
LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG
5-8-90
I--BRUCE WAYNE! MUGGED! LIKE A COMMON PERSON!
YOU WERE RIGHT, PETER. WE MUST FIGHT CRIME BY ANY MEANS POSSIBLE!
BRUCE, I NEVER REALIZED THAT YOU WERE SO POLITICAL!
BEING MUGGED OPENED MY EYES.
5-9-90
THE LAW IS WEAK! WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT CRIMINAL SCUM!
IS HE BUYING THIS?
LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG
THERE'S SOMEONE YOU SHOULD MEET, BRUCE.
AT LAST!
BATMAN BAITS A TRAP... WITH BRUCE WAYNE.
BRUCE, PETER MENTIONED YOU'D BEEN MUGGED.
YES, AND I WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT CRIME!
MEN OF OUR CLASS SHOULD TURN THIS CITY AROUND!
HMMM... THAT DOESN'T SOUND VERY DEMOCRATIC.
5-10-90
HOW FAR CAN I GO TO TRICK THEM?
SOMETIMES WE MUST DESTROY DEMOCRACY TO SAVE IT!
I LIKE THE WAY YOU THINK.
THE WAYNE FORTUNE WILL MAKE US UNSTOPPABLE!
LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG
WAYNE IS A FOOL, BUT HIS WEALTH WILL MAKE OUR BROTHERHOOD POWERFUL!
5-11-90
THERE'S A LITTLE CLUB, QUITE SECRET, I BELONG TO.
IT'S FILLED WITH OUR SORT OF PEOPLE. WILL YOU JOIN?
LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG
OF COURSE I WILL.
I'VE DONE IT!
YOU SEE, BRUCE, PEOPLE WILL NEVER ACCEPT OUR SORT OF LEADERSHIP, UNLESS THEY'RE ENCOURAGED!
LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG
5-12-90
WHEN MY RUTH DIED, I KNEW THAT GOTHAM HAD TO BE CLEANSED WITH BLOOD AND FIRE!
EXCELLENT, FELLOWS! I'M WITH YOU!
WHAT HAVE I GOTTEN MYSELF INTO?
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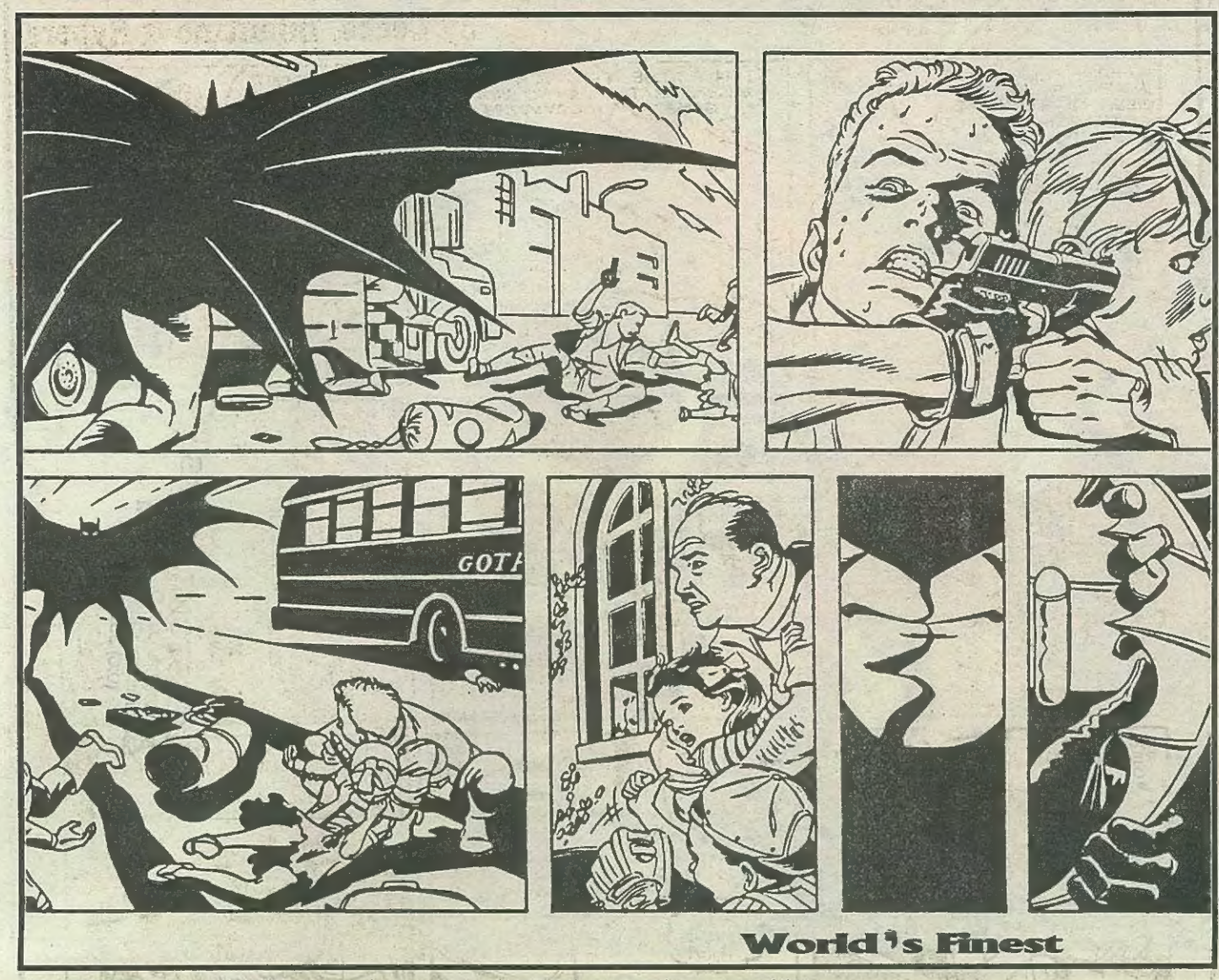

ing for this one. I have loved these two characters for quite some time, and enjoyed there adventures together back in a time when they were friends. But times change, and so do comics. Now it has taken the combined efforts of writer Dave Gibbons and artist Steve Rude to bring together this classic team one more time. ***World's Finest*** *is an example to the comics industry of how good these ideas can be.*

In a few pages at the beginning, the reader is told exactly what to expect from the characters presented-- in a nearly wordless manner. Gibbon's has produced a wonderful story that is equally matched by the best art Steve Rude has ever turned out. I fear that many people may have a trouble adjusting to the "old-fashioned" style that Rude has applied to his art, but I for one think that it captures the essence of the story perfectly.

I agree that the art captures the essence of the story perfectly; this series has a 1950's flair to it that I certainly enjoy--but then again, I grew up on those Jack Schiff/Mort Weisinger era books, so you know I'm going to like this a great deal. Fans who are expecting Batman and Superman to be handled in keeping with the current incarnations of both characters may have to adjust their mindset just a bit--but once they do, they'll be rewarded with an exciting, dynamic story.

The story revolves around a group of orphans, some whom you may know the names of and some who are unfamiliar, and how their lives, and the lives of their cities are intertwined. And the heroes are caught in the middle.

Steve Rude's art, especially his Superman, is dynamic! The Big Red S seems to have leaped out of an old Max Fleischer cartoon and onto the pages of a comic-- it's wonderful! But some of the credit on the art must fall on the shoulders of Karl Kesel. His inks have meshed so naturally with Rude's pencils that thoughts of two people working this well together seem to fly from your mind. The color on the book is by Steve Oliffe, who is perhaps the finest colorist in the business today.

All of these men have shown a love in this book. A love for their art and a love for these characters. But also, they have shown a love for what brought them together-- the past. It was the past incarnations of ***World's Finest*** *that led up to this achievement. The creators don't ignore the changes in the characters that have come about since the original incarnation of this team book, but they remember what it was like when the two greatest heroes in existence could combine to combat a single threat. And I am grateful-- more so than even I realize.*

I have to add a final word about Dave Gibbons' script; Gibbons has proven himself to be a much more sophisticated writer than I anticipated. His storyline is not only a grand super-hero-super-villain adventure story, but it manages to transcend that and say something about the similarities--and significant differences--in Superman's and Batman's personalities (and, for that matter, in Lex Luthor's and the Joker's personalities as well). Many artists turned writers tend to produce stories that are little more than an excuse for a grand visual extravaganza; Gibbons has done much more than that.

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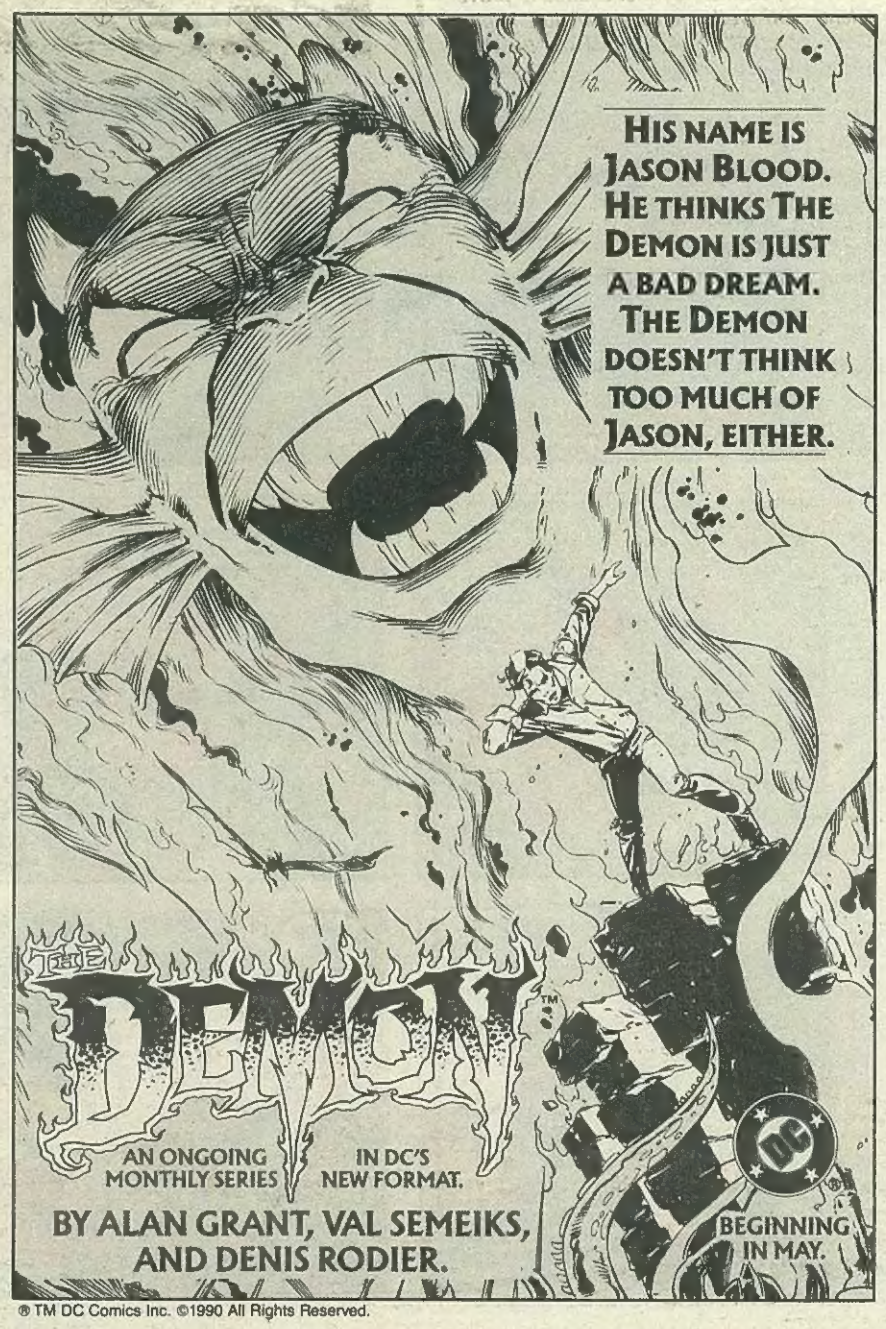
HIS NAME IS JASON BLOOD. HE THINKS THE DEMON IS JUST A BAD DREAM. THE DEMON DOESN'T THINK TOO MUCH OF JASON, EITHER.
THE DEMON
AN ONGOING MONTHLY SERIES IN DC'S NEW FORMAT.
BY ALAN GRANT, VAL SEMEIKS, AND DENIS RODIER.
BEGINNING IN MAY.

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BOB KANE
BATMAN
BY LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG
A GROUP OF ESCAPED CRIMINALS, MOLDED INTO A TERRORIST GANG BY THE MYSTERIOUS RED HOOD...
THIS WAY... HURRY!
HIT ALL THESE TENEMENTS! SET THEM ON FIRE! THE WHOLE BLOCK!
RUN THIS WAY! DON'T LET HIM DELAY US. THE POLICE MUST BE COMING!
I SEE HIM!
NO TIME FOR THAT! COME ON!
BANG!
BANG!
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GOTHAM CITY, IN THE GRIP OF A MASSIVE CRIME WAVE, IS PARALYZED BY FEAR AND SUSPICION.
GOTHAM PRESS
GOTHAM UNDER SIEGE
CRIME INCREASES 900%
I DON'T GET IT, SPUD, WE'RE JUST DESTROYIN' FOLKS' HOUSES. WHAT'S THE POINT?
WHO CARES? THE FIRE'S PRETTY!
THE BATMAN!
I KNOW THE LEADERS' VOICES...
THEY WERE PETER JEFFRIES... AND JASON WHILBY!
LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG
5-6-90